

# STEIN & VARGAS LLP

Overcoming Barriers | Ensuring Communication | Creating Access

October 27, 2021

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Andrew Wackett, MD  
Vice Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education  
Renaissance School of Medicine  
Stony Brook University  
101 Nicolls Road  
Stony Brook, NY 11794

Dear Dr. Wackett,

Stein & Vargas, LLP has been retained to represent Robert Sampson who as you know is a joint MD/MBA student at Renaissance School of Medicine. Stein & Vargas, LLP has a particular interest in ensuring that talented medical students, such as Mr. Sampson, not be subject to discrimination on the basis of disability. In this regard, we have represented a number of medical students in high profile litigation, including *Argenyi v. Creighton University*, 703 F.3d 441 (8th Cir. 2013),<sup>1</sup> *Featherstone v. Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences*, No. 1:CV-14-3084-SMJ, 2014 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 102713 (E.D. Wash. Jul. 22, 2014), and *Ramsay v. National Board of Medical Examiners*, Civ. A. No. 19-CV-2002, 2019 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 222782 (E.D. Pa. Dec. 31, 2019), *aff'd*, 968 F.3d 251 (3d Cir. 2020), *cert. denied*, 141 S. Ct. 1517.

Students with disabilities who confront barriers in receiving necessary accommodations, often require additional time to complete medical degrees not because of a lack of ability but because barriers slow their progress. To deny a medical student who is performing well the ability to complete their medical education solely because of delay caused by disability-based barriers the school or testing entities created would amount to discrimination in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. We have been successful in obtaining preliminary injunctions in such circumstances to prevent catastrophic harm to the career potential of our students.

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<sup>1</sup> After Argenyi prevailed in the Eighth Circuit and in a jury trial, the court awarded the medical student injunctive relief and attorneys' fees and costs in the amount of \$478,372.42. *Argenyi v. Creighton Univ.*, Case No. 8:09CV341, 2014 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 63726 (D. Neb. May 8, 2014).

Mr. Sampson is a gifted student of whom the medical school can be proud. With accommodations for his disability, he is performing well and on track to receive not just a medical degree but also a Master's in Business Administration as well. While he has been a medical student, he has used his time wisely, even receiving a patent on a medical device.

We are gravely concerned by the email sent to Mr. Sampson last evening and would like to discuss this with counsel in hopes of avoiding significant damage to Mr. Sampson and expensive litigation. Mr. Sampson has been told multiple, conflicting graduation dates, including dates that are not feasible from the school perspective and has been seeking clarity for some time on this exact point. Added to this confusion is the reality that Mr. Sampson is in a joint degree program to which the seven year limitation mentioned in last night's email does not even apply. I am very concerned that Mr. Sampson is being held to a different standard than his classmates and would appreciate the opportunity for us all to get on the same page in support of a worthy student at your school. Please provide my letter to counsel so that we may discuss resolution before more damage is done and further attorneys' fees and costs are incurred. I can best be reached by email at [mary.vargas@steinvargas.com](mailto:mary.vargas@steinvargas.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Vargas", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

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